



Vista Del Sol Newsletter



Volume 5 Issue 1

1st Quarter/2008

Project Overview Vista Del Sol



With the number of improvement projects implemented in 2007, Vista Del Sol continues to become a more desirable community. For some who may have just arrived and others who have watched the progress, housing would like to provide updates on the progress of these projects. From the current surrounding you can see some are in progress, several have been completed and a few are on the table for consideration.

Actualization of these projects did not begin when you saw the end results, but was several months in the planning.

Project	Begin date	Completion date
Stucco repair	September 07	19 October 07
Road repair	September 07	December 8 07
New entrance signs	October 07	30 November 07
Dog Park	November 07	26 November 07
Exterior painting	October 07	December
Replace 4 playground	October 07	15 December 07

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Halloween



With Halloween just at the corner, make sure your trick or treat festivities include safety. Much of the information for this holiday is published by MCAGCC Observation Post.

The OP suggestions include hours, safety measures and selection of costumes. As a quick reference; Trick or treat hours begin at 1900 and end at 2200, do not visit units not well lighted, never go inside, don't eat candy until parents check it out, take a flashlight and a cell phone. Parents at all times keep your eye on your child. Additional information is available at www.29Palms.usmc.mil.Halloween

DOG PARK

Vista del Sol's first ever Dog Park is a work in progress. We hope this will resolve problems with dogs using neighbor's yards, playgrounds and other restricted areas. Additionally the park will provide a place for your pets to exercise. The 30,000 square foot park is located on the large hill between Aztec and Two Mile.

Access is available from: Desert Knoll/Aztec; Desert Knoll/Two Mile and at the west end at Two Mile/Aztec entrance. Opening is scheduled for late November, or early December 2007.

Use of the park requires that **all users** agree to follow rules and regulations at all times. These regulations will be posted at all three entrances to the park.

Access to water is steps away, trash bags and container are available and there are three benches for your resting pleasure.

Your responsibilities begin and end



No doubt many of you have heard the statement "do a police report and you don't have to pay for the damages". Please disregard this statement as it is incorrect.

When you take the keys to your Vista del Sol unit, your responsibility for its care and

condition begins and does not end until you return that unit to Housing in acceptable condition. We have experienced broken windows, missing appliances, trash containers and other damages. Residents often state no knowledge of known persons or cause of the damages. This does not however relieve you of financial responsibility even if you completed a police report.

With or without a police report you are responsible for damages to government property. Example: you have a window broken upon returning from a week's vacation and you report it to PMO. The police report does not negate your financial responsibility for the repairs.

The best way to avoid charges for damage is to treat the house as if you owned it, and to purchase a renter's insurance policy as soon as you move into the unit. Renter's policy is not expensive and can save you money in the process. A few sources to check is the phone book, local community, search the internet or ask your neighbors where they purchased their policy.

Secondly, please call housing to report problems that may result in destruction to government property: a leaking toilet can cause damage to ceilings, walls and floors.

Your responsibilities begin and end continued

Never burn candles near a window pane, it will get hot and break. Use caution with explosive-type containers (i.e propane gas tank, CO2 capsules) they can explode and

damage property and cause bodily injury or harm.

Holidays are Here



Once again the joy of the holidays has arrived. This is a great opportunity to connect with family, friends, food and fun. Please be mindful of the dangers of holiday driving; drive safely, better to be a little late than jeopardize safety for timelessness.

As always we have several events planned for your pleasure. One in particular is the Yard of the Holiday (YOH) for Thanksgiving and Christmas. The selection is made by your inspector for the best **dressed** yard, and then verified by management. Winners are selected between the **16th and 21st** on the month of that holiday and notified by phone. Each winning participant receives his/her gift in person from the housing manager. Please make sure we have a good phone number and a time when we may deliver your gift.

Keep in mind the three "Cs" which must be observed: conservation (energy-lights), compliance (i.e. do not go on roof) and creativity; here you can go as far as your creativity takes you.

Yard of the holiday was implemented in 2006. The winner receives the choice of either a ham or turkey (no other substitutions).

Last year the winner for Christmas was selected from Joe Davis. Although we will be looking at **all yards**, it is helpful if you let us know your wish to share your creative ideas this Christmas and Thanksgiving in our yard of the holiday program. Even if you are not participating in YOH, we hope you will decorate and enjoy these occasions to celebrate.

Tips to remember during holidays: use caution when burning candles, when cooking (especially around children), make sure your tree has plenty of water (live trees) and check all your extension cords for wear and tear before using. Never leave holiday lights on when you go to bed or when you are going to be away from your home for several hours. Christmas lights may be turned on at dark.

****note**, Please observe Combat Center Order on removing holiday decorations when each holiday period ends.

Bugs no more



Watch out bugs, the pest man is back! We know it was a struggle during the absence of the pest control professional but all is well, he is back. Most of the urgent ant problems were handled through an outside source and

Bugs no more continued

routine calls were logged and turned into base pest control department.

Pest control has completed all back-logged requests. If you have an unresolved pest problem, please

give us a call at 760-361-6158. However, please note that the use of chemicals for pest control is monitored by a government regulatory agency that dictates how often these chemicals can be used.

Please use all possible natural methods to rid your home of pesky little creatures prior to calling pest control. Per the Combat Center Order, you are the first line of defense for pest control. Visit our web site and read the information on "Ants 101", the articles provide insight on ants and safe natural methods to help you keep your home pest-free. When your unit is sprayed by pest control, you must wait 30 days before they can return for another spraying.

Getting the most from your swamp cooler



Now that summer is almost over, you may start thinking about those warm cozy nights. But before you settle in for the winter, let's look at how

to get the most out of your swamp cooler.

A swamp cooler in the desert is the cooling system of choice not only for its efficiency, but cost-effectiveness. If you are a long-time resident you know where the controls are, how to switch to cool and that the window must be slightly open to allow the hot air to escape. Residents who have just arrived or may **not have** arrived during the time when swamps were needed will need a bit more information. It will be a cooler summer with the correct operational information.

Due to the design of the building, swamps are located above the patio area of the unit adjoining your home. It's very important to report any leaking from swamp coolers; it causes terrible water damage on the patio wall of your neighbor.

There are three small control switches located on the left wall about 5 feet high just after you enter the entry leading to the kitchen (basically the left living room wall). If you have the older version, a chrome plate "cool and heat" is for switching from cool to heat as seasons change. The cool and heat are separate control units.

To the right of this "switching" chrome plate is heating and should be set at "auto heat" and not more than 70 for adequate heating, while conserving energy. The **heating** control panel resembles a central air and heat control. Left of the chrome plate is for cooling and should be set to cool and not less than 68 degrees. If it's already cool in your home, you may want to set the control to **vent** in order to circulate the air. This is especially beneficial if the humidity is 0 to very low.

To maximize cooling from swamps, open windows in the room you want cooled (about 4-8 inches wide) and place a small screw-type lock on the window for safety. When your

Getting the most from your swamp cooler continued

system is working well and the humidity is fairly low, your home should be comfortable. Swamps are quite efficient for cooling when operational instructions are followed and coolers have been properly maintained.

Lighter side of work

To ensure they work properly, swamps are serviced twice a year and on an as needed basis. When new pads are placed in the swamp coolers, it may emit a foul new pad smell for a few days. If you continue to have the smell, please call the maintenance at 760-361-1086.

In addition to swamps, you now have the added benefit of two portable AC's for your comfort when humidity is **high**. However you **cannot** use both cooling systems at the same time. They work opposite of the other and will cause both to fail. Windows must be **closed** when operating portable AC's, but must be **open** when the swamp is in use.

***Note:** The venting/duct system is used for cooling and heating.

After using the new portable ACs for one season, it has come to our attention that water is not evaporating as anticipated and the units began to leak causing damage to carpet. This was evident generally when the unit was run non stop. You should set the unit at the predetermined degree and allow it to shut off. We are working to resolve this issue and request you turn off any leaking ACs and notify housing.

Caution, damage to carpet can be attributed to non-cooperation of turning the unit off when it is leaking; an important point to keep in mind when considering possible costs to you on vacating.



We have spent lots of time working and its now time for fun and enjoyment.

Since 2005 we have been working toward the day when we could invite all VDS's residents to a day just for them.

We would like to begin the meeting and planning stages as soon as we have a committee (i.e. volunteers from VDS residents to help put it all together.) A team of 5-9 people are needed to help work out all aspects for a "resident's day" including deciding the best time of the year for the event. Please submit your desire to join us in the preparation stages to the Vista del Sol housing office or give us a call at 760-361-6158.

Your Thoughts are Important to us

What if
an exam
your
plans



you took
vital to
future
but the

instructor withheld your score? Good or bad you would like to know so that you could make your next move. That's how we feel in housing. We use our score to improve quality of life, customer service, equipment and planning for the next fiscal year.

When we send surveys to you for a response, that is our test score and we need it in order to plan our next move for the future. It's even more essential for you to provide our "test score" in that we will be working to make it better for you based on those answers. Positive responses on how we are doing are also welcomed. But regardless to what you have to say, please make your comments on all submitted surveys and return them to the proper authority.

Like voting, each vote counts, get involved and return your "score" on all surveys you receive.

Welcome new Inspector



On October 1, 2007 Mr. Carlton Thrasher joined Vista del Sol's family housing office as our newest inspector. Mr. "T" as he is often called is a veteran and a long time resident of 29 Palms CA. Mr. Thrasher is no stranger to the operations and mission of the housing office. He worked for FSSI support until late 2005 supervising the ground's crew. He was passionate about his work ethics and continues that principle at VDS. If you live in Two Mile or 101-200 Aztec, please contact him from 0700-1630 with your concerns.

Delivery of information



Information moves the world, and influences all the decisions we make in our lives.

Each project, events or anything soon to occur, housing uses maximum methods to get information to VDS residents. We want you to know what is happening in your community. This often times requires additional staffing to hand deliver for unexpected occurrences.

Every quarter a newsletter is produced and mailed to all 600 units. Vacant unit copies are kept in the office for new residents as they check in.

On every project, road signs are displayed at each exit, mass mailing goes out to residents including those absent from quarters, phone calls are made to those absent from quarters (if we have correct numbers), OP, speed calls, Fridays 107.7 radio, cable channel 6 and our web page.

If you have any ideas on how we can better communicate with you, please let us know. Call 361-6158 or email us.

Ms. Teresa's Desk

I look
to this
of the



forward
section

newsletter, here I share my personal views, provide self help ideas, recipes or newsworthy information. This time I wish to express my gratitude to the parents of the men and women we serve.

Dear Parents,

Thank you for the young men and women who left your homes and family for the good of the United States and humanity. I understand their faithfulness to our country's cause and its beliefs. I appreciate and feel your pain and anxiety when you cannot look daily upon the faces of your children (I say children reverently, we know they are adults.)

I know you are worried and sometimes afraid of the possibilities. I too am a parent and know how I miss seeing my own sons and daughter; they are not in the Military. I cannot say what your sons and daughters are doing; if they're tired, lonely, hungry, cold or afraid. I can say that you, as parents, are remembered each time I am faced with your children and the opportunity to provide assistance to them. When communicating with your daughter or son, I am thankful for the privilege of being in their presence. At the same time, I am saddened that it was not you. On a daily basis I often see your children and grand children; some in strollers, others grade school. Often times, I wondered how **you** are doing and where your thoughts lie. We know we cannot take your place, but try to fill in whenever possible.

In our effort to assist your child, we sometimes move mountains, other times a mere stone. Never the less, we move to

help them feel better about their particular situation. we especially honor those who serve in Iraq or any area of fighting, and keep them in our prayers.

We treat your sons and daughters with admiration and respect, smile with them and listen to their issues. There are times we want to cry with them, but sacrifice crying for caring to harness the strength needed for a solution.

I end on this note; "try not to worry too much", your sons and daughters are held in the highest esteem. Though you do not see them on a daily basis, we remember why they are here, who they left in order to be here and **you** when your son or daughter needs us. May

God bless you daily, during the holiday season and throughout the years.

Sincerely
Ms. Teresa

Vista Del Sol's Staff



760-361-6158

<http://www.29palms.usmc.mil/dirs/inl/housing/hsgmain.asp>
George Greene-Management Asst.
Linda Sayer - Inspector
Carlton Thrasher-Inspector
Teresa Williams-Manager

ICE

How are we doing?

http://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site_id=93

EMAIL

If you are interested in receiving notifications, updates via email, please email us at. We will send project schedules and news affecting your neighborhood; as well as, the quarterly newsletter. Be the first to get the news. Sign up today.

Its easy:

Step #1: Send an email to:
smbplmsfamilyhousing@usmc.mil

(double check to ensure you've typed the email address correctly)

Step #2: Type VDS EMAIL LIST in the subject line

Step #3: Click on Send

You will receive a confirmation email letting you know you've been added to VDS email list. Your email address will be hidden in all Housing emails so that no one will be able to see it.